

NATIONAL CALL TO SERVICE ACT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Nebraska (Mr. OSBORNE) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. OSBORNE. Mr. Speaker, today the gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. FORD) and I introduced a bill called the National Call to Service Act. All of us are very aware of what happened on September 11; and as terrible as that day was and those events were, we have also seen some very positive things that have happened since.

We have seen the resurgence in patriotism. We have seen people who are more cordial and certainly have a greater desire to serve the country. In an attempt to harness this energy, the Call to Service Act would enlist 250,000 people, young people and old people alike, to serve our country. There are three aspects I would like to touch on very briefly here today.

First of all, rural and underserved areas often do not get much mention in a bill of this type. However, the National Call to Service Act does make sure that all areas of the country, particularly rural areas, are recognized. One example of this would be the teacher corps which would provide educational awards to attract and keep teachers in rural areas where it is very difficult to attract and keep teachers in such underserved areas. Another example would be public health programs where again rural areas are often neglected and underserved.

The second area of the National Call to Service Act I would like to call attention to is homeland defense. We have many young people who would like to serve the country, but yet do not want to go into full-time military service. This bill would provide young people with an opportunity to serve 18 months of active duty and then 18 months in a reserve status. In return, they get an educational award at the end of their service.

These young people would be used to guard vulnerable areas such as buildings, bridges, nuclear plants, airports and our borders. Also in the event of a national catastrophe involving bioterrorism, we need a great many people who could provide technical assistance in case of a health emergency.

Thirdly, one of our greatest resources in this country at the present time that I believe is greatly underutilized is our senior citizens. We currently have a great number of children who lack a caring adult in their life. They have no role model. We have 18 million fatherless children in the United States today. Roughly one-half of our young people growing up in this country are growing up without both biological parents. Seniors can certainly fill this gap. They can serve as tutors and mentors for these young people. It has been very well established that a good mentoring program can reduce absenteeism

from school by 50 percent, can reduce drug abuse by 50 percent, can reduce teenage pregnancy, violence and dropout rates significantly.

We think that by utilizing our seniors more effectively, we can serve the country well, and particularly the youth of our Nation.

Mr. Speaker, at this time I yield to the gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. FORD), and he will discuss other aspects of the Call to Service Act.

Mr. FORD. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Nebraska (Mr. OSBORNE) for yielding; and I come from a State with a good football team, but I am delighted that the greatest mind, at least in my era of following college sports, would see fit to allow a young Member like me to partner with him to do something that in the long run will benefit young people for many, many years to come.

It is difficult to expand on what the gentleman from Nebraska has already said, but this bill gives my generation an opportunity to do something that we have not been able to do. For so long we have been reduced in a lot of ways, and some of us have chosen, to be spectators to conflict involving challenges to our values and freedoms. We are hopeful with our friends on the other side of the aisle and this bill's companion, S. 1792, which was introduced yesterday by Senators MCCAIN and BAYH, we are hopeful that this legislation will attract the support of Democrats and Republicans alike in both Chambers.

Mr. Speaker, the district of the gentleman from Nebraska (Mr. OSBORNE) and my district could not be any more different than they are. He is from a rural area in Nebraska; I am from an urban area in Memphis, Tennessee. We are hopeful that regardless of who Americans are, where they live, or how they may identify themselves politically, this bill will attract the support of all of our colleagues, largely because it invites involvement.

The gentleman from Nebraska (Mr. OSBORNE) spoke about the need for this and how critical it is; but just to give more specifics, the purpose of the bill is to basically expand the AmeriCorps program. We propose a fivefold expansion of the traditional program, including new opportunities, as has already been mentioned, for senior service, work study and homeland defense. Specifically, over half of the program's expansion would be used to augment homeland defense in the areas of law enforcement and public health. Additionally, the legislation would provide new options for military enlistment, including expansion of the Montgomery GI bill and the establishment of a new 18-18-18 short-term enlistment option.

These provisions acknowledge that the GI bill has not kept pace with inflation, and a growing shortage exists

for entry-level service needs. The short-term option would qualify E1 level recruits for an \$18,000 education bonus after service of 18 months of active duty and 18 months of reserve duty.

Finally, in an ongoing effort to enhance national service, the bill also sets accountability standards and provides for a new demonstration choice voucher plan, not the voucher plan that my colleagues often think about, but a voucher plan providing grants for young people to apply in areas of public service.

We believe the Call to Service Act presents an immeasurable opportunity to seize on those attributes that define us as Americans and make us proud to serve in this country.

Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for yielding me this time and both Senators for their support; and I hope that all of our colleagues will see fit to support this important legislation.

COMMENDING MAJORITY LEADER DICK ARMEY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. DELAY) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. DELAY. Mr. Speaker, I want to take a few minutes to talk about a real stalwart in this House, and to thank the gentleman from Texas (Mr. ARMEY) for his hard work and to remind our Members about what his leadership and effectiveness have meant to the success of our majority.

When DICK ARMEY first got to Washington, they said his ideas were out of step; but now America has caught up to Dick Armey. He stood firm against communism, and the Iron Curtain failed. He insisted that the welfare system was broken, and millions of Americans are now earning paychecks and have greater self-worth because they have entered the workplace. He took on a tough job of realigning our military base structure and our Armed Forces are more effective today because their bases better support their new mission.

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DICK ARMEY said repeatedly that punishing success was not part of the American dream. And he helped Presidents Reagan and Bush pass pro-growth tax cuts that raised our economic security. Many Americans now understand that a rising economic tide lifts all boats because DICK ARMEY explained it to them.

He reminded us that God is a part of all of our lives and millions of people now question why God has been driven out of our national lives. He fought laws that would have weakened our Constitution, and America remains the freest and most secure country in the world. He said that red tape and

unnneeded regulations were stifling growth and shortchanging job creation and now, despite the blow from September 11, our American economy is the healthiest, most vibrant and most productive in the world.

He knew that if Republicans clearly explained our goals as the majority party, we would earn broad support from the American people, and the Contract With America helped build the first Republican majority in four decades.

He arrives and departs Washington as fundamentally the same man that stood next to me to take his oath of office in 1985, but the Washington he will leave behind in 2003 is a very, very different place. He is just an ordinary man with extraordinary ideas that helped change America.

Since Republicans earned our House majority, the Federal Government has grown leaner, more efficient and more responsive to individual citizens. These changes happened because people like DICK ARMEY knew we could expect more from our government and they insisted that we do better. Our Republican majority has accomplished great things together, and our Nation is stronger, freer, and enjoys the highest living standards in the world.

Several broad principles guided our efforts: We believed that freedom is not free. We worked to ensure that our Armed Forces and the agencies protecting America had all the tools necessary to defend our country. We believed that government answers to the people. We worked to make the Federal Government more responsive, more efficient and more effective in performing its work. We believed that families are entitled to keep more of what they earn. We worked to be careful stewards of their tax dollars and insisted that every dollar was spent as wisely and effectively as it could be.

So, Mr. Speaker, let me say to DICK ARMEY, thank you, DICK, very much, for everything you have done to keep America strong and free. You can be truly proud of what the House has achieved under your leadership. There is no doubt that we will continue improving our Nation over the course of your final year. We must treasure and build upon our gift from previous generations. They left us a great country with a big heart, broad shoulders and the courage to chase hundreds of millions of dreams.

Today, the beacon of freedom is burning brightly. We need to stoke the flame, lift the lantern higher and lead freedom-loving people onward to a better and more fulfilling life.

I want to extend DICK ARMEY my deep thanks for everything he has done to make that happen. Finally, Mr. Speaker, let me offer a special thank you to Susan Armeay for allowing America to borrow her husband all these years. Our country is a better

place because of the sacrifices she and her family have made.

INTERNATIONAL CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE WAR ON TERRORISM

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. OSBORNE). Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. SKELTON) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. SKELTON. Mr. Speaker, in the aftermath of the devastating attacks on New York and Washington on September 11, the United States has taken a range of swift and decisive actions to bring the terrorists responsible to justice and to ensure that sponsors of terrorism are uprooted. Our military has helped drive the Taliban from power in most of Afghanistan and has tightened the noose on Osama bin Laden and his compatriots. We have seized terrorist assets around the world, putting those who would help terrorists on notice that we will dry up those sources of support.

In our military, diplomatic and financial efforts, the United States has received unprecedented support from the international community. Many countries around the world have converted their sympathy into real acts of solidarity. Our battle against terrorism is a global fight. Success requires sustaining a broad coalition of diplomatic and military partners over the long term.

Recently, the State and Defense Departments provided me with a list of 29 countries plus the European Union who have contributed to our current counterterrorist efforts. While each country is helping in specific ways, they all are making a difference in our ability to thwart the global threat posed by terrorist groups like al Qaeda.

Our allies in Europe are among our most committed partners. NATO took the unprecedented step of invoking article 5 of its charter, considering the attacks on the United States as attacks on the alliance as a whole. The European Union has offered broad diplomatic support and nations throughout Europe, from France and Germany to Poland, have offered military and domestic counterterrorism units. Unique among these loyal European partners is Great Britain who has stood with us diplomatically and fought alongside us in Afghanistan. The depth of this special friendship is one for which we should be profoundly grateful.

Beyond our European partners, our allies in Asia—Korea, Japan, Australia and New Zealand—have all provided combat or support forces for this fight. Our relationships with Russia and with India have improved greatly because of our common struggle against terrorism and their continued efforts to support us.

Finally, I would like to note the remarkable actions of Muslim countries

in this global struggle. So many are our friends and recognize that the war against terrorism is not a war against Islam. Pakistan has been crucial to our efforts in Afghanistan and has demonstrated great courage in helping lead the struggle against radical terrorism. Our NATO partner, Turkey, has provided special operations troops and has helped bridge the gap between the West and other Muslim nations. States in the Gulf and throughout Central Asia have also chosen to stand with the global community, seizing terrorist assets, providing public support for our military efforts and granting critical overflight and basing rights.

As President Bush has said many times, this war will be a long and multifaceted one. To succeed, we will need the continued strength and commitment of the American people, but we will also need the ongoing support of our friends around the world. It is in the global interest to end terrorist activity and it will take global efforts to achieve this goal.

EXPRESSING THANKS TO JOAN BATES KORICH ON THE AN- NOUNCEMENT OF HER RETIRE- MENT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from California (Mr. ROYCE) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. ROYCE. Mr. Speaker, as Members of Congress, we all receive numerous honors every year. But having someone named after you is truly a special honor. There is a young boy named Eric Royce Bates out in California. What makes it so special is that his grandmother is my chief of staff, Joan Bates Korich, who has announced her retirement. Joni has worked for me for 19 years, starting in the California State Senate in 1982. I came to Sacramento as a young State Senator at the age of 31. I knew what I believed and I knew what my goals were. What I did not know was how to go about accomplishing those goals.

That is where Joni came in. She helped me learn how to turn ideas into accomplishments. She taught me that friendships can transcend politics and that just because you may disagree with someone, that that does not make them your enemy. She is the ultimate professional who takes her work seriously but never loses her sense of humor.

Thanks to Joni's leadership, our office is known for civility and professionalism. Our constituents in California have benefited tremendously from the unique care and interest she has demonstrated over the years. She has also proven time and time again how much she cares about every member of our staff. To this day, interns and young staff members who worked with us in Sacramento many years ago